

JEREMIAH 23 vs 1

¹ **Woe / how terrible it will be... to the **pastors** who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture! says the LORD.**

We should probably pause and reflect on the seriousness and severity of these words.

2,000 years ago, the night He was betrayed, Jesus said... *If you love Me, guard My Words. If you love Me, you will guard My commands, and My Father will come to you. He who does **not** love Me, does **not** guard My words.* In the resurrection, Jesus asked Peter, *Do you love Me? Feed My sheep.* The sheep belong to the Lord... and to nobody else.

Notice the night He was betrayed, just a modest group of learners... unlettered people, untitled followers... were in a rented guest room... Jesus said: *If you love Me, guard My Words*; no prelates, no chief priests, no doctoral candidates... were present.

So can we get off our high horse... and do what the Prince of glory asked? By the way, the English word: **king**... has at its root: **kin**, the family; the king is the one who has the power to keep the family together. The king was the one... kinging the kinfolk; yet the king was not a tyrant, he was very kind, in other words... the king kinned = he treated kin including strangers... like family... which is the root meaning of: **kind**.

Paul wrote: *Be **kind**... one to another / said differently... treat one another like family, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, as God in Christ has forgiven you -- Ephesians 4.* To the **royal kin**, Jesus asked:

Do you guard His words? Did you teach your children to guard His commands? Do your closest friends and associates guard His words? Do they teach their children to guard His commands?

Woe / how terrible it will be... to the **pastors who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture! says the LORD.**

² **Therefore thus says the LORD God of **Israel** / those **ruled by God**...**

thus says the LORD God... against the **pastors who feed My people / feed them what? Hopefully, NOT junk food. David said: *How sweet are Your words to my taste; sweeter than honey -- Psalm 119;***

[1] you have scattered My flock / not a good thing! They were to protect and care for them.

[2] you have driven them away / not a good thing! Driven away... by boredom or charlatany?

[3] you have not visited them / not a good thing! They had time to visit the office with the donor list.

3 STRIKES! **You're out!**

Behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings,

says the LORD / and the LORD certainly has plenty of time for each and every one of them!

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Ezekiel and Jeremiah agree: for now, the **LORD God** fired ALL the shepherds / the pastors... and for now, **He** will come and do the job Himself. If I were to take bets, my wager is: **He** will be a **Good Pastor** / which is why He said, **I AM the Good Shepherd**... and every pastor on planet earth better step back and ask themselves if they love the traditions of men... more than the word of God. Jesus said to those who needed some title: call one another **brother**... anything more... may be just a bunch of hocus pocus. After all, the night He was betrayed... He called us **friend**... a generous title none of us deserve.

Behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, says the LORD.

³ I / the Good Pastor... will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I sent them.

I / the Good Pastor... will bring them again to their fold; they will be fruitful and increase / when will this happen? when He comes again in great glory.

⁴ I / the Good Pastor... who is a Good Teacher... when He comes *with a rod of iron*...

will set up shepherds over them who will feed them / all the prophets point to this happening in **the millennial kingdom:**

and they / His flock... will fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither will they be lacking, says the LORD.

⁵ Behold, the days come, says the LORD, that I will raise up from David / from his lineage...

a Righteous Branch / Messiah is on the way, a chip off the old block, like father like son,

a King / of kings, our little kingdoms; **not those goofy tyrants and miscreants of this sinful world**

a King will reign and prosper /because He comes with... a royal club; a rod of iron,

and will execute judgment and justice in the earth / and we will be singing: HALLELUJAH!!!

⁶ In his days / the days when the Messiah comes again...

Judah / the little southern, 2 tribes kingdom... will be saved,

and Israel / the greater northern, 10 tribes kingdom... will dwell safely:

WOW! that is GOOD NEWS... isn't it? **for BOTH Houses,** I hope you let them BOTH know.

This is His Name whereby He will be called,

THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

The prophet wrote: When we will make His soul our offering for sin; He will see His generations and be satisfied.
Isaiah 53:10

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⁷ Therefore, behold, the days will come, says the LORD,

that **they** / **Judah**, those who Praise Him; and **Israel**, those who are ruled by Him...

will **no** more say,

As the LORD lives, who brought the children of Israel from the land of Egypt / the whole world has heard that old story... of the Exodus led by Moses; that will no longer be mentioned;

⁸ Instead,

As the LORD lives, who brought up and led the seed / the ancient families and ancestors...

of the house of **Israel** / those who carried with them the nationalistic promises given first to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob... who were to become a blessing to the world, and **not** a curse...

out of the north country, and from all countries where I sent them;

and they will dwell in their own land / and this began to happen 100 years ago, after the Balfour Declaration of 1917 was signed, and the British Military Operation opened Jerusalem and the ancient land.

Too bad the neighbors, actually cousins... in the Middle East who knew.... what prophet Jeremiah wrote 2,600 years ago, but didn't pay attention and prepare for the exciting day to Welcome Home the Family. Too bad **the pastors didn't do their job** keeping **the word of the LORD** ringing in our ears!

And did you notice?

As usual, the LORD tells us lots of Good News first... **He sees the Big Picture**; not just gloom and doom;

but Jeremiah sees the other stuff, too.

⁹ Concerning the prophets / the false prophets running around in Jeremiah's day; no different than the many false prophets... and false teachers... and false deliverers... still running around in the 21st century... so pay attention,

my heart is broken within me; all my bones tremble;

I am like a drunk, like a man overcome with wine,

because of the LORD, and because of **His holy words** / God speaks powerful words.

¹⁰ For the land mourns because of the curse;

the pastures of the wilderness / the place where the sheep were to graze...

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are dried up / without water, we begin to die in 3 days; moreover... without the water of the Word, we are as good as dead,

the land is full of adulterers / faithless leaders bleeping around;

their course is evil, and their might is not right.

¹¹ **For both prophet and priest are polluted** / they are **defiled, corrupt;**

yes, **in My house** I found their evil / their pollution, defilement, and corruption, says the LORD.

¹² **For their way will be slippery, and in darkness, driven on, they will fall:**

for I will bring calamity on them, in the year I visit them, says the LORD / in other words, when He decides it is time to make of visit, which is why He overturn the tables and other things, it was calamitous.

 ¹³ **Foolish things I have seen among the prophets of Samaria; they prophesied by Baal, and misled My people Israel.**

 ¹⁴ **But horrible / disgusting, abominable things I have seen among the prophets of Jerusalem:**

they are adulterers, they advance their lies: they strengthen the hands of evildoers,

so no one turns from their evil; / Judah was most invested with teaching from the Lord having seen Israel's fall into faithlessness, and turning from the Lord; so Judah would be most guilty, and severely treated.

they are all like the citizens in Sodom and Gomorrah.

¹⁵ **Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets** / of **Israel** and **Judah;**

Behold, I will feed them with bitterness, and make them drink cheap vinegar:

for from the prophets of Jerusalem spread profanity throughout the land / by them of **Judah**, nothing is considered sacred to God or His people anymore; it's interesting how many of Judah have been highly educated atheist trouble-makers throughout world history; thankfully that is changing: **One for Israel.**

¹⁶ **Thus says the LORD of hosts:**

Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you / those who swear they have... **a word from the Lord for you:**

they inspire you with futility: they speak fanciful visions of their own mind,

not from the mouth of the LORD.

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17 **“You will have peace”** in other words: **“The LORD says, All is well;”**

they always say that to those who despise Me,

“No evil will befall you” they say to all who walk after the stubbornness of their mind.

Jeremiah asks...

18 Which of these prophets **ever stood in the counsel of the LORD?**

Which of them actually grasped and understood **His word?**

19 Behold, the stormy wrath of the LORD is gone forth, even a whirling tempest will burst on the head of the wicked.

20 The wrath of the LORD will **not** return, until He carries out and performs the thoughts of His heart:

in the latter days / the last days, the days of **Trumpets**, **Afflicting souls**; and **Tents** you will understand it perfectly.

21 I have **not** sent these prophets, yet they ran:

I have **not** spoken to them, yet they prophesied.

22 **If...** they had stood in My counsel, and had caused My people to hear **My words**,

then... they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds.

23 Am I a God who is near, and **not** a God far away? says the LORD

24 Can anyone hide himself in a secret place, so I will not see him? says the LORD.

Do I not fill the heavens and earth? says the LORD.

25 I have heard what the prophets say... who prophesy falsely in My Name,

“I had a dream” they say, **“I had a dream.”**

26 **How long** *will this continue?*

prophets whose hearts prophesy lies; yes, prophets, deceived in their own hearts;

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²⁷ who, by their dreams which they speak one to another...

cause My people to forget My Name, as their fathers forgot My name for Baal.

²⁸ The prophet who has a dream, let him tell a dream;

and he who has **My word**, let him speak **My word** faithfully.

What, is straw compared to wheat? says the LORD.

²⁹ Is not **My word** like fire? says the LORD; and like a hammer that shatters the rock?

³⁰ Therefore, behold,

[1] I am against the prophets, says the LORD, who steal **My words** from each other.

³¹ Behold,

[2] I am against the prophets, says the LORD, who use their tongues and *cynically* say, "He says" ... thus and such, blah, blah, blah, whatever...

³² Behold,

[3] I am against the prophets who prophesy false dreams, says the LORD,

yet they tell them... and by their reckless lies cause My people to err,

I did not send them, nor command them:

nor does the telling benefit this people in the least, says the LORD.

³³ Now, when this people, or the prophet, or a priest asks you, saying,

What is the burden of the LORD? / some used this hocus pocus phrase merely to sound spiritual; people mocked Jeremiah as they asked him... what was the weighty word from the LORD for the day?

You will say to them, **What burden?**

YOU ARE / they were the burden, but not for long ... and I will abandon you, says the LORD.

³⁴ And as for the prophet, and the priest, and the *super-spiritual* people who say,

The burden of the LORD, I will even punish that man and his house.

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³⁵ Thus you will say to your neighbor, and to your brother,

What has the LORD answered? or, What has the LORD spoken?

³⁶ You will **no** longer mention **the burden of the LORD**:

for everyone's word will be his own burden / they will condemn themselves using their own words;

for you have perverted / they had twisted... **the words of the living God**,

of the LORD of hosts our God / the LORD God who created all things visible and invisible.

³⁷ Thus you will say to the prophet,

What has the LORD answered you?

or, What has the LORD spoken?

³⁸ But since you *stubbornly, mockingly* say, **The burden of the LORD**;

therefore thus says the LORD;

Because you say this saying, **The burden of the LORD**,

and I have sent to you, saying,

You will **not** say, **The burden of the LORD**;

³⁹ Therefore, behold,

[1] I will utterly forget you,

[2] I will abandon you and the city that I gave you and your fathers,

[3] I will throw you out of My presence:

⁴⁰ And

[4] I will bring an everlasting reproach and an everlasting shame on you / that's a long time which will **not** be forgotten.